

REMARKS

In the September 8, 2004 Office Action, claim 26 is objected to and claims 18-26 stand rejected in view of prior art. No other objections or rejections are made in the Office Action.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the September 8, 2004 Office Action, Applicants have amended claims 18 and 26 as indicated above. Thus, claims 18 and 26 are pending, with claim 18 being the only independent claim. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

Interview Summary

On October 26, 2004, the undersigned conducted a personal interview with Examiner Emmanuel M. Marcelo, who is in charge of the above-identified patent application. Applicants wish to thank Examiner Marcelo for the opportunity to discuss the above-identified patent application.

During the interview, the rejection in view of the Takeuchi patent was discussed. More specifically, it was pointed out that the Takeuchi patent shows elements 6 in Figures 3, 5, and 7. The Takeuchi patent does not disclose the weight difference between the elements 6.

Claim Objection

On page 2 of the Office Action, claim 26 is objected to for being misnumbered as claim "25." In response, Applicants have renumbered the misnumbered claim 25 as claim 26. Applicants believe that claim 26 now complies with 37 C.F.R. 1.126, and respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

On pages 2-3 of the Office Action, claims 18-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,193,762 to Takeuchi ("Takeuchi patent"). In response, Applicants have amended independent claim 18 as mentioned above.

More specifically, independent claim 18 as amended above now clearly requires that the plurality of second covers be formed such that the second cover that is attached to the second rotor arm is replaceable with any other one of the plurality of second covers. Clearly, this arrangement is *not* disclosed or suggested by the Takeuchi patent or any other prior art of record.

Applicants believe that the Takeuchi patent does not disclose or suggest the second cover that is attached to the second rotor arm in a manner that allows *replacement* with other second cover. The Office Action asserts that that the anti-tangling member 6 of Figures 3, 5, 7 of the Takeuchi patent corresponds to the second cover of claim 18 of the present application. However, as clearly seen in Figures 3, 5, 7 of the Takeuchi patent, the anti tangling members 6 of Figures 3, 5, and 7 are very different in shape. Particularly, although the anti tangling members 6 of Figures 3 and 5 are both attached to the second rotor arm with a pivot 8, the position at which the pivot 8 is attached to the anti tangling member 6 is different. Furthermore, the anti tangling member 6 of Figure 7 is attached to the second rotor arm with an attaching shaft 5, not with a pivot 8. Therefore, the anti tangling member 6 of one of Figures 3, 5, 7 is *not* replaceable with any other of the anti tangling members 6 of Figures 3, 5, 7. This is clearly contrary to the requirement of claim 18 as now amended. It is well settled in U.S. patent law that the mere fact that the prior art can be modified does *not* make the modification obvious, unless the prior art *suggests* the desirability of the modification. In the instant case, the prior art of record lacks any suggestion or expectation of success for modifying the Takeuchi patent to create the Applicants' unique method as defined in claim 18.

Moreover, Applicants believe that the dependent claims 19-26 are also allowable over the prior art of record in that they depend from independent claim 18, and are therefore narrower and allowable for the reasons stated above. Thus, Applicants believe that since the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the invention as set forth in independent claim 18, the prior art of record also fails to disclose or suggest the inventions as set forth in dependent claims 19-26.

Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn in view of the above comments and amendments.

Prior Art Citation

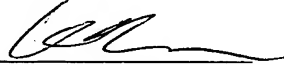
In the Office Action, additional prior art references are made of record. Applicants believe that these references do not anticipate or render obvious the claimed invention.

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Appl. No. 10/771,286
Amendment dated December 7, 2004
Reply to Office Action of September 8, 2004

In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicants respectfully assert that claims 18-26 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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